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Bard

= = = = =

Light come along

I lift the window I put it down

one hand suffices for a thousand winds

to keep the cold out

measure me

am I not tall

in your bookshrine

are my fingers not dexterous

among your keys

do I not turn

even as the seaside goldenrod

coached by the wind

adrift with butterflies, monarchs

mostly but some other sort

black with white bands, with red?

We come along just in time — it's waiting to get light —

her thought sprawled across my mind

images, images, who would believe
not enough things to look at in the world —
wait for daylight and then decide.

3 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

So much of this
is not about me,
so much of me
is secretly thee

I was the train
second-class compartment
over the Forth Bridge
that mountain over there is me

too, and the led mines in Gallatin
nobody uses, nobody uses
me as they should. I am a thought in thinking

or I am thinking
where nobody's home
all my adventures
are ink spilled on white page.

3 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

A morning full of quiet forgetting
Alexandria a queen in hiding
on her upper arm a little scar
could it be a kiss that stayed too long
an insect from another planet?

Who are these royalties
who make their way into every
story I know how to tell?
Dawn light over the rooftop, rain
closer, always answering.
Anserine, geese overhead never
south enough it seems —
but the sea loves me, the sea
is just like my mother,
Rockaway or Gloucester or Waikiki,
Whitby, Point Lobos, or Barges yesterday
the sleek company of the waves, eiders here and there,
my mother's sealskin coat when I was five

gave me all the clue I needed —

the world is sensuous, mysterious and mine.

3 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

The ‘tooth’ of paper they say
that bites the pen and holds the ink —
stabs itself with what I think —

aren’t we that way to each other,
damp from one another’s thinking,
charged? Changed?

3 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

To cry out is to claim
the space that your sound fills —
voice is a kind of ownership.
As too the way a song and its singer's voice
claims a tract of hearer's sense.

The voice lingers in you —
no way now to tell “the dancer from the dance.”

3.x.12, Cuttyhunk

VISIBILITY ¼ MILE

Here I am with me. Here waves.

That's how much one has to say

waiting on the pillow to wake and speak —

a few pages cobbled out of the dark.

History is really about this —

what we were feeling and thinking

while the Enemy — the State and its operators —

warred with itself using our lives.

The state is the incurable disease.

3 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

[DREAMT MIDNIGHT 3-4 OCTOBER 2012]

The dead are living just around the corner
my dead

and they don't change much.

Amy at 77 Mott Street
and mad at me for not knowing where she was
the subway station is vast and empty
and I just missed the train
night, weekend, late, half
an hour till the next,
so big the station, empty, vast, cold. Cold.
I can't make you see the size of it
the dead of it.

Why go to Brooklyn when Mott is in New York?
Because that's where she lived
forty years ago
and you have to go through where a thing was
to find where it is. Is and was are like that, reciprocals,
folded highway map.

*

How long do they have to be dead
before they're free like this
to move around, to be
in people's dreams?

And why is the station so big
with nobody in it, and so cold,
iron and cement work exposed
unpainted, and not a sign in sight?

All the stairways led here
and why is it so cold.

I can't make you see how big it is,
and why so much bigger than a train needs,
the ruins of the World Trade Center up there above me
and I'm all alone.

Such shoddy work
why doesn't everything fall down?

3-4 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Yellow wildflower
from sand among the rocks
tiny-floreted round clusters
October flourishing
and fond of butterflies.
Color of goldenrod
but are they?

3-4 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

The island closed all day in fog —

silence, cool and beautiful.

Alone with the dead.

But they are my dead

they presumably need me

from time to time

to give them what they need.

Fireboats on the river

displaying the shapes of water

they know how to make

here empty harbor. The air.

Eternal celebration,

the long-winded speeches of the wordless dead,

caliginous discourse.

I am exposed by their speech.

Yes, it is me. I do remember

a blacksmith at his forge,

he bent a horseshoe nail

to fit my finger.

It must be me, I still have the hand, the memory, the horse
stamping with that
anxious patience of theirs —
even now a horse is so big —
how can I make you see
the size of a horse, a child,
a man in firelight,
his gleaming anvil?

3-4 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

NEIGHBORS

The old dog

breathing outside.

Can't see the beast

just his breath,

infer the tawny

coat, kindly eyes.

Just as from the cut of phrase you

know who the poet is,

the way her words

work silence in.

4 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Embedded things —
rapturous even.

The fog has lifted
sky full of white —
mist on the sea
a part of the sky.

An autumn bee
early comes by.

And waves crash
calmly on the rocks
below the roses
only one we found
in all that half-mile
of rosebushes by the shore
and took a picture of it
here, the October rose.

= = = = =

The things that are saying
are remembering Socrates
reminded and an age
of witness passes us
who can do nothing
but say what we see
or think as if
there were words.

5 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

The poem

adrift

a dérive

down along the spaces of the page,

the sides,

the shunt

of eyes from side to side,

to drift

where the next word must be

waiting to be said.

The poem is the precise Situationist artifact —

especially the ‘projective’

the breath

that cosmic flâneur

wandering

through white spaces,

drifting into meaning.

5 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Cast off

the air of breath,
the poem is the sky
made to remember
everything all at once,
compact.

The poem makes its own words
denser than they are —
and not just with etymology, history, etc.
though rife with those
but all the *sideways elbowing* a word can do,
till it (as hysterical people say)
is beside itself
in a tumult of meanings.

5 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Bring things home
where the bad dreams
rinse language of its ordinary
and words like raincoat,
forty minutes late, fault
are like stores closed for the night
selling things you don't need.

The wrong café, waiting
as a stranger among friends.

Somehow all this summer
waking has meant waiting.

Why. Five

o'clock on Sabbath morning,

I need to sneak
something in before sunrise,
sneak a dream past the dreamer —
he never knew what hit him —

ink pales as words pass —

why aren't I listening?

Is breaking grammar the way out? Or in? But broken grammar is grammar still. The wrong construction lives in the shadow of the normal, keeps the smell of the norm plus the fragrance of rebellion. But (as usual) the demands of the protestors are less clear than the fact of protest — their voices louder than their words — as if their bodies are protesting, not their minds. And words have other minds.

We break what we can, and move on. But *on* is a difficult terrain. Moorland with no sheep. Carry a flask of meaning as you go in that dry country.

Will I be ready for the light when it's ready for me? Time for my closeup = dawn. The sun studies me from the horizon. I squint at its scrutiny — this comes in an hour or so — you may hear me whimper. The sun is a fierce mistress.

The sun is a woman. But the moon is a woman too. *The same woman.*

In that country they think the moon is the backside of the sun — she shows as she walks away, a reassurance though that she'll be back.

6 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

